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President: Mr. Hamilton Shirley AMERASINGHE
(Sri Lanka).

AGENDA ITEM 27

Question of Palestine (*continued*):

- (a) Report of the Committee on the Exercise of the Inalienable Rights of the Palestinian People;
- (b) Report of the Secretary-General

1. Mr. AL-SHAIKHLI (Iraq) (*interpretation from Arabic*): The discussion on the report of the Committee on the Exercise of the Inalienable Rights of the Palestinian People [A/31/35] marks a new stage in the attempts of the United Nations to solve the tragic problem of the Palestinian people.

2. Since the beginning of this century the Palestinian people has been exposed to a war of extermination by Zionist elements seeking to destroy it as a people. The colonialist imperialist Powers—in particular those Powers which, by reason of their colonialist relations, are directly responsible for the development of events in the Middle East—have made it possible for the Zionist bands to put into effect their plans against the Palestinian people.

3. It is regrettable to have to note the responsibility of the United Nations for the tragedy that came about because the Organization went beyond its prerogatives in 1947 and, counter to the principles enshrined in its Charter, adopted the resolution on the partition of Palestine [resolution 181 (II)], thus creating a regrettable situation which led to

the emergence of a racist entity in Palestine as a legacy of the former British Empire.

4. Since its emergence in Palestine, the hateful Zionist aggressive entity has done everything in its power to keep the region in constant tension, thus hindering the efforts of the peoples of the region for their national development, security and welfare. That entity daily reaffirms its expansionist, racist, aggressive attitude and confirms its presence as the new colonialist base in the Arab world.

5. The serious complications in the Arab region and outside the Arab region which stem from the persistence of the tragedy, to which no equitable solution has been found, make it necessary for the international community to find a solution for the problem, thus eliminating any possible serious consequences that might arise from the continuation of the situation. The General Assembly recently realized the seriousness of the plight of the Palestinian people who have been exiled from their homeland and the effect of that situation on international peace and security. At its twenty-ninth session the General Assembly adopted its famous resolution 3236 (XXIX), which represents a turning-point in United Nations practice in regard to the human tragedy of the Palestinian people. That resolution aroused international concern about the actions of the racist Zionists and their allies. Other international resolutions, such as resolutions of the non-aligned countries, of the Islamic Conferences and others reaffirm the right of the Palestinian people to return to their homeland and to enjoy independence and sovereignty in their own land.

6. Despite the flagrant injustices perpetrated against the Palestinian people, no one, not even the Zionist entity itself, could deny the right of the Palestinian people who were exiled from their homeland to return to their land. Their right of return was reaffirmed in General Assembly resolution 194 (III) of 11 December 1948, as well as in resolution 273 (III), in accordance with which the Zionist entity was admitted as a Member of the United Nations. Now, after more than a quarter of a century of suffering for the Palestinian people and after many years of neglect, the tragedy of the Palestinian people has been accorded the attention it rightfully deserves in the United Nations and is an object of concern to our Organization and to the international community. The Committee on the Exercise of the Inalienable Rights of the Palestinian People is the living embodiment of that change in the attitude of the international community, which now knows that an equitable solution must be found to that problem. We wish to express our appreciation for the sincere efforts made by all the members of the Committee in the preparation of the report on the exercise by the Palestinian people of its inalienable rights. We express our gratitude to them and particularly to the Chairman of that Committee, Mr. Fall.

7. The 20-member Committee succeeded in establishing the reasons for the explosive situation in the Middle East and defining its very roots. We share the views of the Committee to the effect that the Palestinian problem is of paramount importance in the tense situation in the Middle East and that we could not conceive of any possible solution in the Middle East which did not take into account the legitimate aspirations of the Palestinian people, their right to self-determination in their own homeland and their right to sovereignty and independence.

8. The delegation of Iraq considers that the programme of implementation elaborated by the Committee for the exercise by the Palestinian people of their inalienable rights represents a possible solution applicable within the framework of the United Nations and its resolutions on all aspects of the Palestinian problem. The tragedy of the Palestinian people stems from the first Zionist aggression against Palestine and the creation of that Zionist entity. This means that the tragedy, with all its accompanying elements, has existed since 1947, although it was exacerbated as a result of the aggression of 1967. We feel a special responsibility for the Palestinian people which stems from the unity of the Arab cause and from the fact that the Palestinian and Iraqi peoples belong to the Arab nation. It is for this reason that my delegation cannot but express reservations concerning certain parts of the report, especially the references to some of the United Nations resolutions which affirm the existence of the Zionist entity, something which we have already rejected and concerning which we have expressed reservations.

9. In our view, the right of the Palestinian people to self-determination can be exercised only in the whole territory of Palestine, exclusive of any foreign occupation of Palestine and free of any conditions. It is on the basis of this understanding that my delegation will vote in favour of draft resolution A/31/L.20. The delegation of Iraq would have liked the report of the Committee to include a chapter on the measures to be adopted in the event of the Zionist entity's rejecting the recommendations of the Committee or the relevant resolutions of the United Nations. We hope that this aspect will be taken into account in the future in view of its importance for the practical exercise by the Palestinian people of their inalienable rights.

10. The racist nature of the Zionist entity is the only reason for that entity's rejection of all resolutions relating to the rights of the Palestinian people to self-determination in their territory. The Zionists go so far as to deny the very existence of the Palestinian people, and this strengthens our conviction that that racist character of the Zionist entity is at the root of all the obstacles to the solution of the Palestine problem and the establishment of a just and durable peace in that region.

11. The great Powers bear a heavy responsibility, especially those Powers which have played a part in the emergence of the Palestinian tragedy and its continuation, and it is those Powers that must put an end to that tragic situation. We must here speak of the hostile position that the United States has customarily assumed towards the Palestinian people. For instance, the United States has hindered the achievement of any successful results in the Security Council in respect of the Palestinian problem, and

here we wish to draw attention to the responsibility of the Security Council for easing tension throughout the world. The Western Powers should have voted in keeping with the principles enshrined in the Charter and the principles of international law when the matter was put to the vote in the Security Council.

12. The resistance of the Palestinian people was reflected in all circumstances and its determination to fight by every means, including the use of armed struggle, under the leadership of the Palestine Liberation Organization [PLO], the legitimate representative of the Palestinian people, which has spoken of that people's resolve to make every sacrifice in order to free its country from the Zionist claws and all forms of racism. The Palestinian people have the support of all freedom-loving peoples in the world. The Government and people of Iraq, headed by its Socialist Party, is on the side of the Palestinian people until their final victory.

13. Mr. OYONO (United Republic of Cameroon) (*interpretation from French*): For a week the General Assembly has been considering, in connexion with the question of Palestine on its agenda, the results of the work of the Committee on the Exercise of the Inalienable Rights of the Palestinian People, which was set up at its previous session.

14. My delegation's participation in this debate—since in the Security Council and in the General Assembly we supported the resolutions recommending recognition of those rights—testifies clearly to the interest that Cameroon continues to give to the question of the Middle East and to its Palestinian aspect.

15. In establishing the Committee on the Exercise of the Inalienable Rights of the Palestinian People by resolution 3376 (XXX) our Assembly resolutely decided to work unremittingly for a just and lasting peace in the Middle East, which has been in a state of crisis since the Balfour Declaration.

16. Despite the very serious events that have taken place since then and although our Organization has been considering this question since 1947, no just and lasting peace—in other words, a peace acceptable to all parties to the conflict—has been established in the Middle East.

17. Need I recall that the state of war, which is continuing, is due to the fact that the promise of the establishment of an Arab Palestinian State made by our Organization has never been given concrete form?

18. It is a happy event that our Assembly should decide to focus on this aspect of the conflict.

19. In this connexion, I should like to express the great satisfaction that we feel with the report drawn up on this topic by the Committee under the chairmanship of Mr. Médoune Fall, the representative of Senegal. It is a pleasant duty to pay him a brotherly tribute for the skill, objectivity and dedication with which he has discharged his important responsibilities.

20. In my delegation's view, the report of the Committee is clear, balanced and realistic, for it brings together all the

elements for a peaceful and lasting settlement of the Middle East problem by according priority to the settlement of the question of Palestine.

21. Cameroon believes that the state of instability and dangerous tension which continues to exist in the Middle East despite certain important but partial arrangements stems from the fact that the question of Palestine was for a long time relegated to the background, if not obscured by the passions aroused by the dispute, whereas in fact it lies at the very root and centre of the crisis.

22. This is why we consider as an important element—since it is of great political significance and has a great bearing on peace—the changing thinking and behaviour of Governments with regard to the new approach to this question.

23. First of all, it is necessary to put an end to the long tragedy of the Palestinian people, who were unjustly driven out of the land of their birth, by permitting them to return there and to exercise freely their right to self-determination, national independence and sovereignty.

24. It is in this spirit that the General Assembly adopted resolution 3236 (XXIX), which reaffirms the inalienable rights of the Palestinian people.

25. The exercise of these legitimate rights necessarily implies the participation on an equal footing with the other parties concerned of the PLO, the authentic representative of the Palestinian people, in all negotiations that take place under United Nations auspices. The solution of the question of Palestine is the keystone of any equitable and comprehensive settlement of the Middle East problem.

26. This also implies the withdrawal of Israel—which is entitled to existence and whose frontiers must be secure and recognized—from all the Arab territories occupied by force since 1967.

27. Realism and the higher interest of international peace and security—a particularly sensitive issue in that part of the world—require that all the parties concerned should set aside their former grievances and at the same time refrain from playing on the weaknesses of their opponent, so as to dispel mistrust and create and promote a climate favourable to détente, dialogue and coexistence.

28. The parties concerned have a duty to abandon their dogmatic positions, in order to permit the resumption of the Geneva Peace Conference on the Middle East.

29. The recent statements of Mr. Farouk Kaddoumi, head of the Political Department of the PLO, and by the Israeli side, are, in this connexion, encouraging.

30. Mr. AKÉ (Ivory Coast) (*interpretation from French*): We are all in agreement in recognizing and affirming today that the question of Palestine is at the very heart of the Middle East problem and that an objective and realistic search for a just and permanent solution of that problem presupposes the satisfactory settlement of that question through the fulfilment of the legitimate aspirations of the Palestinian people and the full development of that people

in its own homeland where it will be independent of the other States in the region.

31. If the question of Palestine is posed today in terms of the self-determination of a people, it is simply because General Assembly resolution 181 (II) of 29 November 1947 on the partition of Palestine has never been fully implemented or complied with as far as the Palestinian Arabs, Christians and Moslems are concerned. Whatever our views on that historic resolution, whatever the responsibilities assumed in this regard on the part of those who took the initiative while refraining from taking the necessary measures to ensure its full implementation, or of those who have refused to accept such a decision, we must agree to the state of affairs as it is, since we can change nothing. Today more than ever we are obliged to acknowledge that any serious, sincere effort towards the establishment of a just and durable peace in the Middle East must absolutely take into account the two political realities which prevail in the region and which condition any durable solution: the Israeli reality, on the one hand and the Palestinian reality on the other. Any calm analysis of the situation must start from those two realities. To pretend to ignore or to refuse to acknowledge them would be tantamount to turning our backs on peace and to seeking to prolong the situation of “no war, no peace”.

32. The delegation of the Ivory Coast has unequivocally defined its position during the last two debates that the General Assembly has devoted to the Palestine question. We shall not reiterate it here, except to reaffirm that if the 1947 decision on the partition of Palestine led to the emergence of the State of Israel with an independent national existence, the other State which was provided for in that same resolution and which should have encompassed the Palestinian Arabs, both Moslem and Christian, has yet to be established.

33. The efforts of the international community, and of the United Nations in particular, must seek, above all, to enable the Palestinians to create, in turn, their own State and to have their own national existence as an independent, sovereign and internationally recognized State. In other words, such efforts must seek to restore the dignity and legitimate rights of the Palestinian people in conformity with the provisions of the United Nations Charter and the relevant resolutions of the Security Council and the General Assembly.

34. That is the difficult but indispensable task on which peace in the Middle East and in the world depends, and to which the United Nations has devoted itself for the last three years, when it decided no longer to consider the Palestinian problem solely from the humanitarian point of view, but, rather, to place it in its true context, which is essentially and solely political.

35. The Palestinian problem no longer, in fact, arises as a question of refugees; rather it arises in terms of the political rights of a people, the Palestinian people. The Palestinians are not, and must no longer be, considered as mere refugees, unemployed and abandoned to their fate, compelled to rely on the meagre resources of the United Nations Relief and Works Agency for Palestine Refugees in the Near East and on international assistance to survive, and forced to find in violence a means of drawing the attention

of the international community to their plight. They must henceforth be regarded as a people which has grown through difficulty and has been marked by the harsh trials of exile, humiliation and frustration, a people which has given proof of its maturity and which is fighting for the recognition of its right to a national existence.

36. The United Nations must now take the necessary measures to enable the Palestinian people to fulfil its legitimate aspirations in the part of Palestine that belongs to it but which is still held by Israel and certain other States in the region. Of course, the attainment of those aspirations must in no way be achieved to the detriment of the right to existence of other States in the region. We must have the courage to say so, in order that each and every one of us may become aware of the limits of our action.

37. In this connexion, in its resolution 3236 (XXIX) of 22 November 1974, the General Assembly defined the inalienable rights of the Palestinian people and, last year, in its resolution 3376 (XXX) of 10 November 1975 established the Committee on the Exercise of the Inalienable Rights of the Palestinian People, which was to study and to recommend to the Assembly a programme of implementation designed to permit the Palestinian people to exercise the rights recognized to it in resolution 3236 (XXIX).

38. Before setting forth the views of my delegation on the report of the Committee and on its recommendations, I wish to affirm the following. The Ivory Coast still gives its full support to Security Council resolutions 242 (1967) and 338 (1973), which, in our view, remain a reasonable and realistic basis for an over-all settlement of the Middle East problem—a settlement in which a just solution must be found for the Palestinian question in conformity with the principles of human rights. We wish to emphasize the fundamental nature of the principles contained in those resolutions, on which any lasting settlement must be founded: the evacuation of the Arab territories occupied by Israel since 1967; the recognition of the right of all States in the region, including the right of Israel, to live in peace within secure and recognized boundaries; an end to the state of war and a just settlement of the problem of the Palestinian people. True, Security Council resolution 242 (1967) spoke only of a just settlement of the refugee problem, but we believe that that understanding of the problem has been largely overtaken by events. That resolution would gain much by being amended to take account of the Palestinian reality, which is an integral part of any settlement of the Middle East question, and without which it would be vain to speak of a durable settlement. The Ivory Coast affirms that resolution 3236 (XXIX), despite its ambiguities and certain regrettable omissions, in some respects significantly and usefully complements Security Council resolutions 242 (1967) and 338 (1973). We therefore believe that any realistic approach to the question of Palestine and to the Middle East question must be founded on all three resolutions, which are not mutually exclusive but complete one another rather skilfully. It is in this sense, incidentally, that our positive vote on resolution 3236 (XXIX) should be understood.

39. That being the case, we wish to congratulate the members of the Committee on their efforts, their perspi-

capacity and the sense of responsibility they demonstrated during their work. We appreciated the presentation of the report and recommendations of the Committee by its Chairman and Rapporteur [66th meeting], and the spirit in which they invited us to study them. We are pleased to mention, in this connexion, the statement made by Mr. Fall of Senegal, Chairman of the Committee, on 15 November 1976:

“In deciding to submit this report to you in the form in which it was submitted to the Security Council, our Committee does not claim to put before you a perfect document. On the contrary, we are convinced that the changes to be made by the General Assembly will only improve and enrich it, thus bringing us closer to our final goal, which for all of us must be the establishment of a just and definitive peace in the Middle East. It goes without saying that such a goal cannot be realized without a basic change both in the political actions and in the thinking of all parties to the dispute.” [66th meeting, para. 34.]

And the Chairman of the Committee added:

“Israel must give up its expansionist aims and its manifestations of triumphant demagoguery and realize that it cannot live and prosper in the middle of the present hostile and explosive environment that now surrounds it. Peace and understanding with its neighbours are indispensable to the security and well-being of its people.

“The Arabs, for their part, should adopt a more realistic approach to the situation and banish from their minds any idea of ‘driving the Jews into the sea’. They must abandon the subjective and emotional approach which has so far characterized their relations with the Jews. The State of Israel is a reality of our time, and its existence cannot be denied.” [Ibid., paras. 35 and 36.]

40. We endorse that statement of the Chairman of the Committee on the Implementation of the Legitimate Rights of the Palestinian People, a statement filled with wisdom and realism which, we hope, will guide the members of the Committee in their future work.

41. Last year the Ivory Coast abstained in the vote on resolution 3376 (XXX) concerning the establishment of the Committee, because it felt that the objective was ambiguous in so far as it was to confine itself to proposing a programme for the implementation of the exercise of the rights of the Palestinian people without taking into account the situation prevailing in the region. We fear, on reading the report and its recommendations, that the Committee has become a prisoner of this ambiguity, which was created deliberately so as not to take into account certain obvious realities which the Chairman of the Committee recalled so pertinently.

42. So far as the Ivory Coast is concerned, the Committee should not only assist the Palestinian people in realizing their national rights and in creating a Palestinian Arab State, but it must also aid the Arab world, including the Palestinians, Israel and all those of us who are working for the establishment of a just and permanent peace in the Middle East, to accept, in the interest of that peace, the

two realities to which we referred earlier, namely, the existence of the State of Israel as an irreversible fact and the creation of a Palestinian Arab State with its own existence, independent of Israel and Jordan, as an imperative of the times.

43. If those considerations had been accepted, the Committee could have laid down the programme for the implementation of resolution 3236 (XXIX) and its recommendations, in particular as regards the right of the Palestinians "to return to their homes and property from which they have been displaced and uprooted". Those recommendations would then have taken account of the inherent right of any sovereign State to protect its security and of the fact that such a return cannot be achieved without its agreement.

44. In addition, the Committee omitted, it seems to us, specific reference to Security Council resolutions 242 (1967) and 338 (1973), which also set forth a number of principles that we regard as fundamental in our quest for a comprehensive solution to the Middle East question, at the heart of which is the Palestinian problem.

45. Of course, in adopting its resolution 3236 (XXIX), the General Assembly refrained from mentioning those two resolutions, thus minimizing the scope and meaning of its own resolution. Its adoption has detracted nothing from the validity of those two Security Council resolutions, and since the inalienable rights of the Palestinian people, which we support, cannot be exercised in a vacuum, it is important to take into account all the elements that will make such exercise possible in practice in the near future.

46. Those are the two fundamental weaknesses that we see in the Committee's report and recommendations and which lead us to believe that some of the recommendations, in particular those relating to the right of return of refugees from 1948 to 1967, lack realism, because they tend to ignore Israel's existence, and because we must rely on Israel to resolve this matter in such a way as not to endanger its own existence and security. Moreover, the recommendation relating to the establishment in Palestine of an independent Palestinian entity is imprecise as regards the geographic limitations of that entity and continues to sow confusion in the minds of some and fear of destruction in Israel.

47. Perhaps we could be given some clarification by the leaders of the PLO who participated in the work of the Committee, especially since according to certain rumours they now envisage the establishment of a Palestinian State in the territories to be evacuated by Israel on the West Bank of the Jordan and the Gaza Strip. We would be happy to hear the views of the PLO on this point, because, if such rumours are confirmed, they would be introducing a new and important element in our debate and would place the settlement of the Palestinian problem in a more realistic context. The acceptance of the establishment of such a State, with due respect for the right of existence of the other States in the region, would be an encouraging sign of a change of attitude on the part of one of the principal parties involved in the settlement of the Middle East problem. Together with this acceptance there should be a corresponding change in the attitude of the other party concerned.

48. As stated with so much wisdom by Mr. Fall of Senegal, the Chairman of the Committee, the thinking of the protagonists in the Middle East crisis must change if they truly wish to achieve peace in the region. The Arabs must show that they are willing to accept Israel and to live in peace with Israel. Israel, for its part, must give proof of understanding vis-à-vis the Arabs, and in particular the Palestinians by evacuating the Arab territories it occupies and promoting the realization of the legitimate aspirations of the Palestinian people. To seek the integration of that people in another State in the region would be tantamount to trampling underfoot the right of self-determination of that people and becoming trapped in a process that is prejudicial to world peace.

49. The Arabs' refusal to recognize Israel's right to exist—a refusal which keeps alive in Israel the fear that the Arabs seek its destruction as a nation on the one hand, and Israel's attitude of power and defiance, its refusal to evacuate the territories it occupies and to recognize the Palestinian people's right to an independent national existence and its opposition to the PLO's participation as the representative of the Palestinian people in the process of negotiation, on the other, are at the root of the lack of progress in respect of a solution of the Middle East problem. The difficulties encountered result from mutual mistrust, a mistrust that could easily be dispelled through a policy of mutual appeasement. Israel must give assurances of its willingness to withdraw from the territories it has occupied since the six-day war and recognize the right of the Palestinians to settle in their own homeland. The Arabs, for their part, must recognize Israel's right to exist and banish from the minds any idea of seeking its destruction through violence or any other means.

50. For our part, our duty is to help them to overcome this mistrust. We can do so by advocating, for the problems with which they are faced, such as the one we are now considering, objective solutions that take fully into account the clearly understood interests of all the peoples and States in the region. We must do everything to create a climate of confidence propitious to a dialogue between the Arab world and Israel, thus contributing to the establishment of a new era of peace and justice and co-operation in the region.

51. If the mandate of the Committee were extended, we believe it could do useful work if it took fully into account in its deliberations the numerous suggestions made during this debate to amend or complete its recommendations. We believe, in addition, that we should envisage its enlargement in order to make it better balanced so that it may be in a better position to reflect the concerns of all the interested parties and the international community.

52. The work accomplished by the Committee is certainly not perfect and arouses certain reservations on our part for the reasons that I have indicated; however, it may be improved to the extent that its members, bearing in mind the views of the parties directly concerned, endeavour to elaborate recommendations and solutions satisfactory to all the parties and capable of implementation in practical terms.

53. In making these remarks, we have in no way sought to please anyone or to damage the interests of any of the

parties. We have remained loyal to ourselves by speaking to all sides the language of friendship and truth; in so doing, we hope to serve the cause of peace, which is our only concern.

54. Mr. CAMARA (Guinea) (*interpretation from French*): Previous speakers have traced the history of the problem of Palestine. We, in our turn, should like to recall certain facts which indisputably form part of the lengthy chronicle of the Middle East and which will certainly help further to clarify this item on our agenda.

55. When the English were defeated by Turkey in the First World War, the British authorities were forced to seek the support of Sherif Hussein of Mecca. This is why Sir Henry McMahon stated on 14 July 1916: "I have the pleasure to announce to you that the independence of the Arab countries is definitely recognized by His Majesty's Government." This statement was to be reiterated by the British general, Sir Stanley Maude, on 11 March 1917:

"Britain undertakes to satisfy the natural aspirations of the Arab peoples and to establish a national government in Iraq as soon as the war is over."

56. But the most reassuring promise was made on 27 May 1917 by the Commander-in-Chief of the British armed forces in the East, General Allenby:

"All the inhabitants of Palestine should celebrate this day with joy, for henceforth they will be independent and free to choose the government of their choice."

57. The Franco-British agreement known as the Sykes-Picot agreement, however, contradicted all these promises and instead endorsed the partition of the Middle East in such a way as to facilitate the establishment of the State of Israel.

58. It will be recalled that on the morrow of the First Zionist Congress, held at Basel in August 1897, Theodor Herzl stated:

"If I were to sum up the Basel Congress in a word, I would say that at Basel I founded the Jewish State. If I were to say that today I would provoke a burst of laughter throughout the world. In five years perhaps, and certainly in 50 years, all the world will see this. The State has already been essentially founded in the will of the Jewish people to establish a State."

59. Developing the theory of the establishment of a Jewish State, Herzl told the French in 1897, with a view to obtaining France's assistance:

"The country which we are proposing to occupy will include lower Egypt, the southern part of Syria and the southern part of Lebanon. This position will make you masters of the trade with India, Arabia and Africa from the east to the south . . ."

60. Herzl told the Germans, who wished to build a railroad from Berlin to Baghdad and whose support he wanted:

"We wish to establish on the east shore of the Mediterranean a modern centre of culture and commerce

which will give direct and indirect support to the expansion of Germanism."

61. It becomes clear after what I have recalled that the founders of the State of Israel used diplomacy of every kind in order to bring about the statement of 2 November 1917, which was to go down in history as the Balfour Declaration and which was the antithesis of what Great Britain had promised Sherif Hussein of Mecca. This declaration, signed by Arthur J. Balfour, Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs, said, *inter alia*:

"His Majesty's Government view with favour the establishment in Palestine of a national home for the Jewish people, and will use their best endeavours to facilitate the achievement of this object . . ."

"I should be grateful if you would bring this declaration to the knowledge of the Zionist Federation."¹

Thus we can readily understand the terms of the letter addressed to the American, Louis D. Brandeis, by Chaim Weizmann, in which he said:

"A Jewish Palestine established by Great Britain and supported by America will deal a fatal blow to the joint domination of Islam by the Prussians and the Turks in the East."

62. We can better understand the counsel given to Mr. Chaim Weizmann on 18 September 1922 by the first British High Commissioner in Palestine, Sir Herbert Samuel:

"Now you know what remains for you to do: intensify immigration so that in time the Jewish population settled in Palestine will be the majority in the country."

63. This advice had its result at the Tel Aviv Congress in the adoption of the following brazen demands: first, the Jewish State must be established immediately in Palestine; secondly, full powers must be conferred on the Jewish Agency to enable it to bring to Palestine as many Jews as it saw fit; and, thirdly, an international loan and other forms of financial assistance must be given the Agency to guarantee the transfer of 1 million Jews to Palestine and ensure their subsequent economic development.

64. Israel and South Africa historically are both States founded on colonial settlement. Both were born as part of the world expression of European capitalism. To be convinced of this, it is sufficient to recall a remark made by the former South African Prime Minister, Verwoerd, when he said:

"The Jews took the territory of Israel from the Arabs, who had lived there for a thousand years. And I applaud them for that. But, like us, they are a country of *apartheid*."

J. The delegation of the Party-State of Guinea has the historic duty to say here that, if at the outset uninformed international opinion viewed the Palestinian cause merely as an affair of a group of people without a territorial

¹ See *Official Records of the General Assembly, Second Session, Supplement 11*, vol. II, annex 19.

attachment and deprived merely of their material rights, today the Palestinian cause is the cause of everyone, even those who are not necessarily Arabs and who, like the Jew Ahud Adif, request that a democratic State should be established in the land of Palestine.

66. Ever since the partition plan decided upon by the General Assembly on 29 November 1947, which led to the establishment of a Jewish State, the State of Israel, through its paramilitary organizations, has never ceased harassing the Arabs in their lands and it was not for nothing that the Haganah existed.

67. The thirty-first session of the General Assembly has the historic duty to rehabilitate the United Nations in the eyes of the martyred peoples. It will do that by approving the report of the Committee on the Exercise of the Inalienable Rights of the Palestinian People.

68. The twenty-ninth session of the General Assembly, in its consideration of the question of Palestine at its 2296th plenary meeting on 22 November 1974, expressed in resolution 3236 (XXIX) its serious concern at the fact that the Palestinian people were prevented from enjoying their inalienable rights, in particular the right to self-determination. This same resolution reaffirmed the inalienable right of the Palestinians to return to their homes and property from which they had been displaced and uprooted; it also reaffirmed that the Palestinian people was a principal party in the establishment of a just and lasting peace in the Middle East.

69. The General Assembly appealed to all States and international organizations to assist the Palestinian people in its struggle to regain its rights by all possible means, in accordance with the purposes and principles of the United Nations Charter.

70. We all recall that, when it adhered to the United Nations Charter on 11 May 1949, Israel accepted without any reservations whatsoever all the obligations deriving from that Charter and undertook to respect those obligations like any other Member of our Organization. Consequently, the General Assembly, in resolution 273 (III) admitted Israel to membership like any other Member, and especially like a peaceful Member ready and willing to accept all the obligations of the Charter. One need only look at what is happening in the Middle East to realize that the State of Israel is very far from observing scrupulously the rules and regulations to which it subscribed. Indeed, contrary to the provisions of resolutions 181 (II) of 29 November 1947 and 194 (III) of 11 December 1948, Israel's frontiers are now well beyond what had been envisaged; that is true despite the decisions taken on 19 December 1949 by the Trusteeship Council of the United Nations.² Israel's repeated violations of its obligations to the international community have led the Security Council to contemplate taking measures against Israel; in particular, it has called for the withdrawal of Israeli armed forces from the occupied territories and the achievement of a just solution of the problem of the Palestinian refugees.

71. The exercise of the inalienable rights of the people of Palestine is a paramount condition for a solution to the

Middle East conflict. Such a peaceful solution will be the result of the efforts of the parties concerned and of everyone of goodwill. Among the latter, our Committee is one of the most authoritative representatives. For the Palestinians to be able to exercise their rights, the PLO must remain the sole representative of that people and Israel must regard it as a valid spokesman, on a footing of equality with all the parties concerned in the conflict.

72. The return of the Palestinians to their country should be carried out in two phases, as has been recommended. The first phase would coincide with the liberation of the occupied territories. The second phase would follow and would include the return of those who left the country in the difficult conditions of 1947 and 1948. The people of Palestine will be consulted about its self-determination. That consultation will no doubt lead to national independence and sovereignty. The International Court of Justice, if this question were brought before it, would agree that it is normal that the Palestinians, from wherever they come, should return to their ancestral land, in conformity with a time-table that could be established.

73. Scrupulous respect for the United Nations Charter, the Geneva Conventions and all the obligations which Israel has voluntarily assumed must lead its representatives to undertake an immediate review of their position in order to help in finally solving the Middle East problem.

74. We have the firm conviction that the Palestinian question is a question of a martyred people on which suffering and humiliation have been inflicted. The solution of that problem lies in the constant efforts of all men who love justice and peace. For its part, the Republic of Guinea, its Party-State and its militant people will spare no effort to ensure that the noble people of Palestine may fully exercise its rights, including the right to self-determination, independence and sovereignty.

75. Mr. SCRANTON (United States of America): That the legitimate aspirations and interests of the Palestinian people must be taken into account in working out a settlement in the Middle East is an elementary truth. Without doubt, this is one of the central issues that must be resolved in the negotiations to have a just and lasting peace, which is what we all seek for the Middle East. The United States matches its commitment to such an outcome with that of any other country here represented.

76. But the Committee report we are considering today is based on this premise without consideration having been given to other vital and absolutely essential issues: or if consideration was given by the Committee to these issues, they are not represented in the report in any way whatsoever. I shall name but a few.

77. There is no mention of the right of Israel to exist in the Middle East. The need for the Palestinians to accept the legitimacy and reality of the State of Israel is utterly ignored. The maintenance of peaceful relations with Israel within the framework of an over-all peace settlement is not mentioned. Moreover, nowhere in the recommendations is there the stipulation that the Arab States, as well as Israel, must join in ending the state of war and arriving at a peaceful settlement in the area. Even those few examples

² See *Official Records of the Trusteeship Council, Second Special Session, Supplement No. 1*, resolutions 113 (S-2) and 114 (S-2).

make clear the one-sidedness and lack of balance in the Committee's report.

78. There is one further, very basic flaw in the report. In large measure the Committee's recommendations prejudge the outcome of negotiations, negotiations that must take place—and we all know it—between the parties themselves, in accordance with Security Council resolutions 242 (1967) and 338 (1973). Any individual or State involved in international negotiations at any time is aware that no solution to this or any other dispute can be imposed by this Assembly. Such an imposition without the agreement of the parties themselves is obviously unfair in the first place, but it is futile besides. It is senseless, because it will not work.

79. One recommendation in the report, that there be a complete withdrawal by Israeli occupation forces "no later than 1 June 1977" [A/31/35, para. 72 (a)], utterly conflicts with Security Council resolutions 242 (1967) and 338 (1973), which call for negotiations between the parties concerned for the purpose of settling all outstanding problems. In short, this recommendation would have us circumvent the framework of a negotiated settlement of the Arab-Israeli conflict as established by the United Nations itself.

80. The purpose of negotiation is to reconcile differences, to balance the rights and interests of the parties involved, and, in this case, to do this within a framework in which full consideration is given to the inhabitants of the region. Such negotiations cannot take place here in the General Assembly.

81. I conclude from reading the report that the Committee had one intention—to bring to the attention of the General Assembly the fact that the legitimate aspirations and interests of the Palestinian people must be taken into account in working out a settlement in the Middle East. With this we agree.

82. But to draw from that premise a report which seeks to have this Assembly impose a solution of the Arab-Israeli dispute but utterly ignores other basic issues in this dispute and which is totally devoid of balance, with conclusions that are unworkable and recommendations which prejudge the outcome of negotiations—then frankly and bluntly, I say that this makes the United Nations look ridiculous.

83. Further, in the draft resolution before us we are asked to vote to extend the mandate of this Committee. No constructive purpose will be served by that action. The Committee's work is finished. It has produced a report setting forth the views and recommendations of the members of the Committee. An extension of the Committee's mandate will not contribute in any way whatsoever to the work—very important work—that lies ahead, namely, negotiations among the parties.

84. We are also asked to refer this question once again to the Security Council. The Council has already considered the Committee's report. Will a solution to the dispute be advanced by another Security Council meeting on the subject? Of course not.

85. So far, the Council has considered the problems associated with the occupied territories and the future of the Palestinian people on five separate occasions this year. Over and over again the same speakers say the same things, and none of this excessive rhetoric advances the negotiations even by one step.

86. For all those reasons the United States will vote "No" on the draft resolution before us, as we did last June in the Security Council on the Committee's report.

87. Now, a few further words.

88. I believe this body intends to be a responsible one. We understand the motive behind this report, the deep feelings of the members of the Committee for the Palestinian people and their long-standing sufferings in the Middle East. The vivid image—a very vivid image—of one of those refugee camps lives with me always, as I am sure it does with each and every one of you who may have visited one. All of us—I assume, every single one of us here—want to resolve that problem for those people, for all the people of the Middle East—indeed, for the world, for peace and for humanity.

89. Recently we have been reading and hearing about the possibility of another effort for peace in the Middle East. I am one of those who believe that such an opportunity truly exists. I hope and pray that effort will be undertaken. For the General Assembly cannot impose peace on the Middle East dispute. Lasting peace can come only through negotiation by the parties that are directly involved.

90. The talking should stop, and the negotiating should begin. The framework for those negotiations exists—a framework which was established by the United Nations. The diplomatic channels are open. This Assembly should get on with its other work.

91. The PRESIDENT: We have concluded the debate on agenda item 27.

AGENDA ITEM 53

United Nations Relief and Works Agency for Palestine Refugees in the Near East:

- (a) Report of the Commissioner-General;
- (b) Report of the Working Group on the Financing of the United Nations Relief and Works Agency for Palestine Refugees in the Near East;
- (c) Report of the United Nations Conciliation Commission for Palestine;
- (d) Report of the Secretary-General

REPORT OF THE SPECIAL POLITICAL COMMITTEE (A/31/333)

92. Mr. HAYNES (Guyana), Rapporteur of the Special Political Committee: I have the honour to present to the General Assembly the report of the Special Political Committee on agenda item 53 [A/31/333].

93. The consideration of this question by the Special Political Committee was based mainly on the report of the Commissioner-General of the United Nations Relief and Works Agency for Palestine Refugees in the Near East

[UNRWA] on UNRWA's activities for the period 1 July 1975 to 30 June 1976 [A/31/13].

94. During the eight meetings which the Special Political Committee devoted to the consideration of the item, the Committee heard 43 speakers in the general debate. The Committee adopted five draft resolutions the texts of which are in paragraph 17 of the report now before the Assembly. As is indicated in its report, the Special Political Committee recommends to the General Assembly the adoption of these five draft resolutions.

95. Mr. HERZOG (Israel): In speaking on draft resolutions A to E, in paragraph 17 of document A/31/333, I shall refer, in particular, to draft resolutions D and E. These two draft resolutions not only contain information that completely disregards and contradicts the true state of affairs obtaining in the area, but, as draft resolution E demonstrates, they show a callous lack of concern for the welfare of the refugees in the Gaza Strip.

96. Israel has been and is today fully conscious of the humanitarian aspects of the problem of the displaced persons, but Israel must reconcile its desire to assist the return of the displaced persons with its responsibility for the safety, welfare and security of the population in the administered areas and in Israel, as well as the security of the State itself.

97. It is common knowledge that certain Arab Governments continue to furnish aid and support to terrorist organizations grouped together in the PLO and that they have attempted time and again to infiltrate terrorists into the areas administered by Israel. Thus the prevailing situation does not permit a large-scale return of displaced persons over and above those that Israel has been admitting all along over the years.

98. In view of the tragedy of Lebanon, this decision by the Government of Israel could not have been vindicated in a more realistic manner. Israel has no intention of becoming another Lebanon. One has only to recall the statement made by the representative of Lebanon [31st meeting] in which he described how refugee camps in the Lebanon had been turned into fortresses.

99. Indeed, the heaviest fighting that has taken place in Lebanon centred around the refugee camps. Tal Za'atar is a classic example in point. Over the years this process has continued, and the attention of this Assembly has been drawn to it every year by this delegation and implicitly also by the UNRWA reports. The true dimensions of these developments have become known only after the bloodshed in Lebanon.

100. Turning now to draft resolution E, I wish to reiterate what we have made abundantly clear during the debate in the Special Political Committee, namely, that the refugees concerned have been given, for the first time since 1948, the possibility of moving into decent housing equipped with all the proper facilities available in modern dwellings. One need only visit Gaza and see the eagerness with which the refugees await their turn to move into these new houses. For the first time a country in the Middle East is prepared to lend a hand to the Arab refugees and assist

them in rehabilitation and in the improvement of their standards of living, and what does the United Nations do? This body is about to adopt a resolution which in fact will call upon these refugees to abandon their new houses and return to the squalid shelters in the old camps, with no facilities and with open sewers running along their narrow alleys. It is simply beyond my comprehension how the United Nations can stoop so low as to allow the Arab countries to force it to conform to their own policy of using the Arab refugees as mere pawns rather than as human beings. Is the welfare of the refugees concerned of no consequence? Can this Assembly call on these refugees, with a clear conscience, to return to those miserable conditions? Has it no heart? Just think of it. When 4,000 Arab families moved out of refugee camps in Gaza, out of the most squalid conditions, into decent housing which they acquired with their own earnings—some of them paying in cash, others assisted by mortgages or loans of the Government of Israel—the Special Political Committee recommended to this Assembly a draft resolution calling on the Government of Israel to return the refugees from housing in Gaza with running water, electricity and gardens to primitive, disease-infested hovels. And that is what the Assembly is called upon now to confirm. How inhuman and debased can this Organization become?

101. I believe that this show of open and unashamed inhumanity is unprecedented, and therefore I call on all those who still have a semblance of human compassion in them to reject draft resolution E, if they are truly concerned about the welfare of the refugees.

102. There is no parallel in the entire world to the callous behaviour of the Arab Governments towards their own brethren. Tens of millions of refugees—over 50 million refugees since the Second World War—have been rehabilitated and reintegrated throughout the world. The Arab Governments, in an act of brutal disregard for human rights and feelings, have chosen to retain them as political pawns and to leave the Palestinian Arab refugees in their misery. The refugees have been urged by the Arab leadership—in Gaza particularly by the PLO—to resist any move into decent housing which would improve their conditions, to resist any move to give them gainful employment in Israel and Gaza, to resist any move to become organized within the framework of the Israeli labour unions and achieve the dignity of labour. The refugees, for their part, have rejected all these attempts, and to all intents and purposes most of the problem has been resolved because the entire refugee labour force is gainfully employed in Israel and in Gaza and is already included among the highest brackets of income per head in the whole of the Middle East.

103. Most of the elements of the refugee problem have disappeared completely. The refugee rations which are being distributed are, for instance, of little consequence from a nutritional point of view today, having regard to the average income per head today in Gaza. It is utterly incongruous that, in an act of international callousness such as has never been seen in history, this, the only refugee problem in the world to be perpetuated, has been allowed to continue at the expense of the international community. Nothing could be more ludicrous and absurd than the fact that this situation is allowed to continue when one day's supply of oil in the Arab world could solve the entire

refugee problem. Very soon it will be less than one day's supply, when the oil price is raised for those countries whose charity is invoked to maintain this refugee problem.

104. Israel is committed to working for a just settlement of the refugee problem in accordance with the relevant provisions of Security Council resolution 242 (1967). However, the continuous Arab war against Israel created not only an Arab refugee problem but also the problem of Jewish refugees from Arab countries. Israel could have approached the question of the Jewish refugees in the same manner as the Arabs approached their refugee problem. We could have kept these refugees in camps, financed by the United Nations, as political pawns. Instead, the Jewish people throughout the world, in pursuance of our inherent humanity and civilization, cared for the refugees, transported them, rehabilitated them and re-established them as useful citizens and productive human beings—this in comparison with the callous brutality with which the Arab world has treated its refugees. It does not befit the lofty principles of this Organization for the United Nations to assist the Arabs in denying the refugees proper and decent housing. Eight hundred thousand Jewish refugees were driven out of Arab countries where they had lived for thousands of years and contributed to the culture, the commerce, the science, the literature and the well-being of the countries in which they had lived. They left behind considerable wealth. Yet not one word concerning their rights or their properties is mentioned in any United Nations statements or resolutions. Let me reiterate and make it again quite clear that we will not at any stage consider valid any discussion of the refugee problem in the Middle East if half of that problem, the Jewish refugee problem, is ignored.

105. Finally, let us take this refugee problem out of its political context and look at it as a humanitarian problem. We are talking basically about an exchange of populations—500,000 Palestinian Arabs today for some 800,000 Jewish refugees who left the Arab world. However, I appeal to representatives here, when approaching this vote, not to lend a hand to the conversion of this Organization, which is gradually becoming the laughing-stock of the world, into a theatre of the absurd. Let me spell it out for this Assembly. Let me point out what this Assembly is asked to recommend in draft resolution E.

106. Representatives are asked to urge Israel to remove refugees from modern, clean and decent housing, such as shown in this photograph in my hand—I am prepared to make these photographs available to every representative here—and to return them to wretched refugee camp conditions, such as we can see in this second photograph. Representatives are asked to urge Israel to return refugees from the housing shown in the photograph in my right hand to the hovels shown in that in my left hand. That is what they have been asked to vote for in draft resolution E, and if they do so they will make themselves the laughing-stock of the world.

107. I hope that, by translating the misleading words of the draft resolution into reality, I will have encouraged representatives here to reconsider their vote, or at least make them feel a bit ashamed of themselves.

108. The PRESIDENT: We shall now proceed to vote on the draft resolutions recommended by the Special Political Committee in paragraph 17 of its report [A/31/333].

109. We shall vote first on draft resolution A, entitled "Assistance to Palestine refugees".

Draft resolution A was adopted by 115 votes to none, with 2 abstentions (resolution 31/15 A).

110. The PRESIDENT: We shall now vote on draft resolution B, entitled "Assistance to persons displaced as a result of the June 1967 hostilities". As the Special Political Committee adopted this draft resolution unanimously, may I consider that the General Assembly wishes to do the same?

Draft resolution B was adopted (resolution 31/15 B).

111. The PRESIDENT: We now pass to draft resolution C entitled "Working Group on the Financing of the United Nations Relief and Works Agency for Palestine Refugees in the Near East". The report of the Fifth Committee on the financial implications of this draft resolution is contained in document A/31/341. The Special Political Committee adopted draft resolution C unanimously. May I take it that the General Assembly wishes to do the same?

Draft resolution C was adopted (resolution 31/15 C).

112. The PRESIDENT: We turn now to draft resolution D, entitled "Population and refugees displaced since 1967". A recorded vote has been requested.

A recorded vote was taken.

In favour: Afghanistan, Algeria, Argentina, Australia, Austria, Bahamas, Bahrain, Bangladesh, Barbados, Belgium, Benin, Bhutan, Botswana, Brazil, Bulgaria, Burma, Burundi, Byelorussian Soviet Socialist Republic, Canada, Central African Republic, China, Colombia, Comoros, Congo, Cuba, Cyprus, Czechoslovakia, Democratic Kampuchea, Democratic Yemen, Denmark, Ecuador, Egypt, El Salvador, Ethiopia, Fiji, Finland, France, Gabon, Gambia, German Democratic Republic, Germany, Federal Republic of, Ghana, Greece, Guyana, Hungary, Iceland, India, Indonesia, Iran, Iraq, Ireland, Italy, Ivory Coast, Japan, Jordan, Kenya, Kuwait, Lao People's Democratic Republic, Lebanon, Lesotho, Liberia, Libyan Arab Republic, Luxembourg, Madagascar, Malaysia, Maldives, Mali, Malta, Mauritania, Mauritius, Mexico, Mongolia, Morocco, Mozambique, Nepal, Netherlands, New Zealand, Niger, Nigeria, Norway, Oman, Pakistan, Peru, Philippines, Poland, Portugal, Qatar, Romania, Rwanda, Senegal, Sierra Leone, Singapore, Somalia, Spain, Sudan, Surinam, Sweden, Syrian Arab Republic, Thailand, Togo, Trinidad and Tobago, Tunisia, Turkey, Uganda, Ukrainian Soviet Socialist Republic, Union of Soviet Socialist Republics, United Arab Emirates, United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland, United Republic of Cameroon, United Republic of Tanzania, United States of America, Upper Volta, Uruguay, Venezuela, Yemen, Yugoslavia, Zaire, Zambia.

Against: Costa Rica, Israel.

Abstaining: Malawi, Papua New Guinea.

Draft resolution D was adopted by 118 votes to 2, with 2 abstentions (resolution 31/15 D).

113. The PRESIDENT: We turn now to draft resolution E, entitled "Palestine refugees in the Gaza Strip". A recorded vote has been requested.

A recorded vote was taken.

In favour: Afghanistan, Algeria, Argentina, Australia, Austria, Bahamas, Bahrain, Bangladesh, Barbados, Belgium, Benin, Bhutan, Botswana, Brazil, Bulgaria, Burma, Burundi, Byelorussian Soviet Socialist Republic, Canada, Central African Republic, China, Colombia, Comoros, Congo, Cuba, Cyprus, Czechoslovakia, Democratic Kampuchea, Democratic Yemen, Denmark, Ecuador, Egypt, El Salvador, Equatorial Guinea, Ethiopia, Fiji, Finland, France, Gabon, Gambia, German Democratic Republic, Germany, Federal Republic of, Ghana, Greece, Guyana, Hungary, Iceland, India, Indonesia, Iran, Iraq, Ireland, Italy, Ivory Coast, Japan, Jordan, Kenya, Kuwait, Lao People's Democratic Republic, Lebanon, Lesotho, Libyan Arab Republic, Luxembourg, Madagascar, Malaysia, Maldives, Mali, Malta, Mauritania, Mauritius, Mexico, Mongolia, Morocco, Mozambique, Nepal, Netherlands, New Zealand, Niger, Nigeria, Norway, Oman, Pakistan, Peru, Philippines, Poland, Portugal, Qatar, Romania, Rwanda, Senegal, Sierra Leone, Singapore, Somalia, Spain, Sri Lanka, Sudan, Surinam, Sweden, Syrian Arab Republic, Thailand, Togo, Trinidad and Tobago, Tunisia, Turkey, Uganda, Ukrainian Soviet Socialist Republic, Union of Soviet Socialist Republics, United Arab Emirates, United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland, United Republic of Cameroon, United Republic of Tanzania, Upper Volta, Uruguay, Venezuela, Yemen, Yugoslavia, Zaire, Zambia.

Against: Costa Rica, Israel.

Abstaining: Malawi, Papua New Guinea, United States of America.

Draft resolution E was adopted by 118 votes to 2, with 3 abstentions (resolution 31/15 E).

AGENDA ITEM 3

Credentials of representatives to the thirty-first session of the General Assembly (continued):*

(b) Report of the Credentials Committee

FIRST REPORT OF THE CREDENTIALS COMMITTEE (A/31/308)

114. The PRESIDENT: The first report of the Credentials Committee is contained in document A/31/308, and I trust that representatives will take note of it. There will be no formal presentation of the report.

115. Mr. EL SHEIBANI (Libyan Arab Republic): I should like to make the following statement regarding the credentials of the delegation of the Zionist entity, which calls itself Israel, to the thirty-first session of the United Nations General Assembly in connexion with agenda item 3, the

report on which appears in document A/31/308, dated 4 November 1976.

116. The United Nations has been seized of the problem of Palestine since the termination, in 1947, of the British Mandate in Palestine. To epitomize the origins and historical developments surrounding the question of Palestine in the United Nations, suffice it to say that the General Assembly, lacking all legal qualifications to sanction the partition of any nation, issued its infamously acclaimed resolution 181 (II) of November 1947 calling for the partition of Palestine.

117. The United Nations by taking such action, not only contradicted, and acted at variance with its Charter, but also inflicted an unforgivably cruel injustice on the Arab people of Palestine. Thus the United Nations not only repudiated the inalienable and indisputable right of the Arab Palestinian people to self-determination, abetted their eviction from their ancestral home, and thereby caused them to become defenceless and desperate refugees, but it also opened the door to the Zionist entry, which in its determination to be established in the land of Palestine, used terrorism, aggression and usurpation of land in carrying out its evil scheme.

118. Notwithstanding the fact that the right of all peoples to self-determination was and still is a fundamental tenet of the United Nations Charter, the Palestinian question was submitted to the General Assembly and was dealt with in a manner contradicting that very fundamental principle. Those who today decry the expulsion of a racist régime on the perfidious pretext of upholding the principle of universality are the same States which violated the Charter by devising the illicit partition of Palestine in 1947. They should be reminded that there can be no double standard in the international code of ethics and morality, and that they had best be silent.

119. Furthermore, those unpardonable forces which helped to translate Zionist aspirations into a *de facto* régime sought *de jure* recognition by guaranteeing its admission to the United Nations. The General Assembly's hasty resolution 273 (III) of May 1949 admitted a racist colonial régime to membership in the United Nations on the condition that it unreservedly accept the obligations laid down in the United Nations Charter and comply with the preceding resolutions 181 (II) and 194 (III) on the partition of Palestine and on the resettlement of the Palestinian refugees in their homeland. However, as we have all witnessed, the Zionist entity's policies have shown an unprecedented contempt for all United Nations resolutions and decisions, which, as such, have been totally disregarded.

120. The Zionists, in their insatiable appetite for more territory, were not satisfied with the area they unscrupulously and illegally acquired in 1947. As is characteristic of all colonial régimes, they have persisted in their greed, perpetuating terrorism, aggression and expansionism throughout the whole of Palestine and even beyond into the territories of other Arab States.

121. In their systematic and unrelenting effort to liquidate the Palestinians, they pursue their policy of genocide and mass slaughter aimed at the complete obliteration of the Arab people of Palestine.

* Resumed from the 1st meeting.

122. At its twenty-ninth session, the General Assembly of the United Nations, in its resolution 3236 (XXIX), recognized the PLO as the sole representative of the Palestinian people. The General Assembly, furthermore, reasserted the right of the Palestinian people to self-determination and reaffirmed their inalienable right to return to their homeland and property in Palestine. The Zionist entity, which was illegally granted membership in the United Nations—with the connivance of its imperialist allies—persists in disregarding with impunity the overwhelming decree and decision of the United Nations.

123. Based on the aforementioned, the credentials of the delegation of the Zionist entity to the thirty-first session of the General Assembly should not be accepted, primarily because the Zionist delegation represents a racist colonialist régime that is morally and legally corrupt, and as such has no place in the membership of this Assembly.

124. On behalf of the Arab group of States, I would like to place on record our strongest reservations with regard to the credentials of the Zionist delegation to the thirty-first session of the General Assembly.

125. The PRESIDENT: The reservations made by the representative of the Libyan Arab Republic on behalf of the League of Arab States will be noted.

126. The Assembly will now proceed to vote on the draft resolution contained in paragraph 10 of document A/31/308. I would draw the attention of the Assembly to the fact that the Credentials Committee adopted the draft resolution without a vote and, in addition, recommends to the General Assembly the adoption of this report. May I take it that the Assembly decides to adopt that draft resolution?

The draft resolution was adopted (resolution 31/16).

127. The PRESIDENT: I call on the representative of Israel to exercise his right of reply.

128. Mr. HERZOG (Israel): I reject out of hand the statement just made by the Libyan representative, allegedly on behalf of the Arab group of States, which negates the principles of the Charter of the United Nations and, above all, the principle of the universality of this Organization.

129. The credentials of the Israeli delegation are, of course, in due and proper order, and were found to be so by the Credentials Committee. However, you will be surprised to hear that I rise nevertheless, on behalf of the delegation of Israel, to thank the representative of Libya for having given expression publicly to what I regret to say appears to be a true Arab voice on the subject of our conflict.

130. In the past few days we have heard all sorts of noises from the Arab world indicating, as it were, an interest in peace. We have had our doubts about this verbal smoke-screen, designed to influence gullible visitors to our area. The statement just made represents, apparently and unfortunately, the real approach in the Arab world. The voices of their representatives to the United Nations are, I regret, the voices which we must take seriously, and not the smooth blandishments uttered as part of a diversionary manoeuvre designed to mislead those who are not sufficiently familiar with the problems of our area.

131. I therefore express our thanks to the representative who has just spoken for having assisted Israel to clarify the issue.

The meeting rose at 12.40 p.m.